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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT, AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY

THE PATH

THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY, AND ARYAN LITERATURE

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WE talk much of the "rights" of men. But we have just one right, and that is THE RIGHT TO DO RIGHT. *No man was ever made "good" by law; no man was ever made moral by law. Each man must be a law for himself, both moral and spiritual. Men, according to the vicarious atonement idea, blame their parents for their wrong attributes and tendencies, and accept only the good as their own. They are unjust, for both good and bad are their own earnings. If we have good, let us be happy that at some time we earned it; if we are in bad case, let us be glad, claim it, understand it and correct it. If we want a civilization better than the one we have now, we are the ones to start right now to make it.* —R.C.

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(c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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A U M

When the supreme reality is not known, the reading of the scriptures is fruitless. Even when the supreme reality is known by the mind only, the reading of the scriptures is fruitless. —*The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXXVII **July, 1949** **No. 9**

SONS OF BHARATA

SEEK this wisdom," counseled the sage Krishna, "by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error, O son of Bharata." Krishna's formula for the realization of self-knowledge, for all its simplicity, encompasses four foci of philosophical discipline—action, aspiration, intuition, and motive—and three impersonal forces that aid the aspirant: the wise, the truth, and right action. Thus Krishna, in the manner of the wise with truth, assembles the elements of the search for knowledge in concentrated form, sounding a mantram, drawing worlds of meaning into the orbit of a single sentence. Religions, cults, and sects have been built on one or another phase of truth-seeking, and have failed of their objective. Not action alone, nor aspiration, will bring a man to the well-spring of truth; neither intuition nor a good motive is sufficient. Truth, the whole truth, whatever it may be, must engage the *whole man*—mind and body, spirit and soul, action, thought, will and feeling.

The action of the wise man is single because it is complete, and it is complete because it is universal. Action at the hands of the sage is truth, and truth is constantly active throughout his being. "Doing service" is not a special effort for the man of spiritual enlightenment: it is natural and inevitable. "Strong search" is not a grimly-held resolve: it is the path of life. "Questions" no longer torment and pursue him: he pursues them tirelessly, knowing they

mark the forward way. "Humility," a subtle hypocrisy in lesser men, is in him a spontaneous reflection of his gratitude toward those beyond his stage, those who themselves are humble, having conquered self. The wise man does not serve without seeking to serve aright, nor does he question without modesty. Using the finer energies that a pure motive attracts, the possessor of self-knowledge feeds all the forces of his nature, the "forty-nine fires," with the same fuel. His consciousness is one, impartite, piercing up and down through all the states or planes of Being.

"What may such a sage declare? Where may he dwell?" He dwells in the heart of every being, the Witness, the resting-place, and the Friend. He declares what Krishna declares, and Buddha, and H. P. Blavatsky. That declaration, coming from within, heard dimly and often only by its echoes, is the similitude in every man by means of which he knows the truth when he finds it. Locked in the imperishable center of man's nature, true principles are powerless in the world. Drawn out through the sheaths of the soul by the presence of those who can make matter porous to ideas, the principles of knowledge inherent in the soul gradually establish channels of outlet in the mind. The sage, able to invest any form with "truth" or a portion of himself, and impersonal enough to reach the truth in every soul—no matter how disorganized its vehicles—can make a contact between the soul's knowledge and the man's waking mind. But that contact must be preserved by the man himself. The abyss spanned by a single thread of illumination must be bridged permanently, and the building of that bridge is the long process of self-realization.

In building the bridge from self to Self, every action and thought, each motion of the will, is to be considered and judged in relation to the end in view. If in the service of others the aspirant can move out of the personal self toward the Self of all; if in seeking to serve the greatest good of the greatest number he travels resolutely in the direction of his highest aspirations; if he questions his motive with every principle his mind can grasp, striving to lift his line of thought above the churning waters of his unconquered self; if in all earnestness he seeks out those who by purity of purpose hold sway over the elemental forces—then he will hear the wisdom of the wise from within himself. He will re-mind himself, creating

a more appropriate instrument for skill in the performance of action. He will ensoul the body, refining its texture until it offers the least resistance to spiritual motive and effort. And all along the way he will remember and help those who know still less, whose hope is weaker, who are without the consolation of the laws he has learned.

At last, every thread of thought woven into the bridge of self-knowledge, every energy trained to a single aim, and the will fixed immovably in the direction of spiritual evolution, man the master of life can sound in all its tones and overtones the ancient mantram for the arousal of other "sons" of Bharata-Varsha, "the land of active (spiritual) works *par excellence;* the land of initiation and of divine knowledge":

Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error.

"The Extent of our Ability"

The instructions of the *Gita* will be very difficult for all who are living for themselves and who have not in some small degree begun to believe that they are not here for their own sake. But when we feel that there is no separation between us and any other creature, and that our Higher Self is leading us through all the experiences of life to the end that we shall recognize the unity of all, then, instead of continually acting contrary to that object of the Higher Self, we try to acquire the right belief and aspiration. Nor need we be deterred, as some are, by the extreme difficulty of eliminating the selfish desire for progress. That will be the task during many lives, and we should begin it voluntarily as soon as it is known, instead of waiting for it to be forced in upon us through suffering and many defeats.

Every one who desires to come to the condition of the "right-seeing sage" must try to the best of his ability to imitate the sage who has succeeded. And such is the word of the Master; for He says in many places that, if we expect to have His help, we must apply ourselves to the work of helping humanity—to the extent of our ability. No more than this is demanded. —W.Q.J.

MODERN APOSTLES AND PSEUDO-MESSIAHS

[“Wherever Theosophy spreads,” writes “Spectator” in the article reprinted below, “there it is impossible for the deluded to mislead, or the deluded to follow.” What the reader will think of this statement must depend upon whether Theosophy represents to him opinion and belief—or knowledge. The present article, republished from H. P. Blavatsky’s magazine *Lucifer,* first appeared in July, 1890, in the cycle of some of Mme. Blavatsky’s most powerful assaults on the fallacies of Western culture. The student is invited to reread, as corollaries to “Modern Apostles”: “Diagnoses and Palliatives,” “Progress and Culture,” and “The Mote and the Beam,” all of which appeared in *Lucifer* during July and August, 1890. (See THEOSOPHY IV, 197, 253, and 216, respectively.)

It will be remembered, also, that the Third Message to American Theosophists (April, 1890) declared with equal forthrightness, first, “the only man who is absolutely wrong in his method is the one who *does nothing*”; and second, “whenever the healer [or reformer?] interferes, consciously or unconsciously, with the free mental action of the person he treats, it is—Black Magic.” The correlation between these two statements is a simple matter, philosophically, but the practical distinction between a man and his method, or between his sincerity and his ideas, is probably the most difficult exercise of impersonality that can be attempted. Western civilization since 1890 has not neglected the regular production of apostles and messiahs, and the confusion, tragedies, and moral disasters following in the train of false prophets are so many urgent appeals for the clarity that *Theosophy* (aside from its apostles) can arouse.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

THERE has probably never been a period within our recollection more given to the production of “great missions” and missionaries than the present. The movement began, apparently, about a hundred years ago. Before that, it would have been unsafe to make such claims as are common in the present day. But the revelators of that earlier time were few and far between compared to those who are to be found now, for they are legion. The influence of one or two was powerful; of others, whose beliefs were dangerously akin to a common form of lunacy—next to nothing. All will recognize a wide difference between Ann Lee, whose followers flourish at the present time, and Joanna Southcote, whose hallu-

cination long ago, and in her own day, excited smiles from rational people. The venerable Shaker lady, the "Woman" of Revelation XII, taught some truths amid confused ideas as to their practical working. At least, in a rather loose age, she held up an ideal of pure living which must always appeal to the spiritual nature and aspirations of man.

Then followed a period of moral decadence in the messianic perceptions and works. The polygamy taught and practised by Joseph Smith and Brigham Young has been one of the strangest features of any modern revelation or so-called religion. Zeal and martyrdom were both illustrated in these leaders of the blind—the one without knowledge, and the other worse than useless. It was a prophecy of more lawless prophets, and more disastrous followings.

With the spread of the spiritualistic cult, the Messiah craze has vastly increased, and men and women alike have been involved in its whirlpools. Given, a strong desire to reform somehow the religious or social aspect of the world, a personal hatred of certain of its aspects, and a belief in visions and messages, and the result was sure; the "Messiah" arose with a universal panacea for the ills of mankind. If he (very often she) did not make the claim, it was made for him. Carried away by the magnetic force, the eloquence, the courage, the single idea of the apostle *pro tem,* numbers, for very varied reasons, accepted him or her as the revelator of the hour and of all time.

With burning indignation at the enthrallment of womanhood in marriage, Victoria Woodhull arose to proclaim freedom. The concentrated forces within and around her withstood insult, calumny, and threats. What her exact utterances were, or what she meant herself, it is not easy now to discover. If she indeed preached free love, she only preached woman's damnation. If she merely tore down social veils, and rifled whited sepulchres, she did the human race a service. Man has fallen to so material a level that it is impossible to suppress sexual passion—but its exaltation is manifestly his ruin. Some saw in her teachings a way of liberty dear to their own sympathies and desires, and their weaknesses and follies have for ever dealt a death-blow to any real or imagined doctrine of free love, upheld no matter by whom. Victoria Woodhull grew silent, and the latest interpretations of the Garden of Eden and the fall of man, with which she has broken the silence, do not approach anywhere

near in truth and lucidity to Laurence Oliphant's inspirational catches at the meaning of some of those ancient allegories in the book of Genesis. Blind as he was to the key of human life in the philosophy of reincarnation, with its impregnable logic, he gave some vivid side-glimpses of truth in his *Scientific Religion.*

Yet Victoria Woodhull should have her due. She was a power in the land, and after her appearance, which stirred up thought in the sluggish, it became more possible to speak and write on the social question, and its vast issues. So much plain-spoken and acted folly created a hearing for a little wisdom.

After this, in the spiritualistic field, many lesser lights stood forth. Some openly advocated sexual freedom, and were surrounded by influences of the most dangerous order. The peace and happiness of many a home have been wrecked by these teachings, never more to return. They wrecked the weak and unwary, who reaped hours of agony, and whom the world falsely regarded as wicked. The crusade at last against these more open dangers of spiritualism became fierce, but although publicly denounced—an Oneida Creek never could become popular!—the disguised poison creeps about in underhand channels, and is one of the first snares the mediumistic inquirer into Spiritualism has to beware of. "Affinities" were to redeem the world; meanwhile they have become a bye-word. There is an unwritten history in Spiritualism which none of its clever advocates will ever record. Some of its latest Messiahs and their claims are ignored, and their names hardly mentioned, but we hear nothing of the hot-house process by which their abnormal condition was produced. Certain of these have been, verily, the victims of their belief—persons whose courage and faith in a more righteous cause would have won them lasting victory. And certain of these are mad vortices in which the inexperienced are at last engulfed. The apotheosis of passion, from the bitter fruit of which man has everlasting need to be redeemed, is the surest sign of moral degradation. Liberty to love according to the impulse of the senses, is the most profound slavery. From the beginning nature has hedged that pathway with disease and death. Wretched as are countless marriages, vile as are the man-made laws which place marriage on the lowest plane, the salvation of free-love is the whisper of the snake anew in the ear of the modern Eve.

No one denies that there are aspects of Spiritualism which have been useful in some ways. With this, however, we have nothing to do. We are pointing now to the way in which it has accentuated a common illusion.

The claims to final appropriation of the prophesied year 1881, the two witnesses, and the woman clothed with the sun, are so varied and diverse that there is safety in numbers. A true understanding of Kabbalistic allegory, and the symbolic galleries and chambers of the Great Pyramid, would at once disperse these ideas, and enlighten these illuminations. To distinguish the white rays of truth from influx from the astral sphere, requires a training which ordinary sensitives, whether avowed spiritualists or not, do not possess. Ignorance emboldens, and the weak will always worship the bold.

Some of these apostles denounce alike Spiritualism and Theosophy; some accept the latter, but weave it anew into a version of their own; and some have apparently arisen, independently of any other cult, through the force of their own or somebody else's conviction.

No one can doubt the poetical nature of the inspiration of Thomas Lake Harris. He had an intellectual head and a heart for poetry. Had he kept clear of great claims, he would have ranked at least as a man of literary ability, and a reformer with whom other reformers would wish to shake hands. His poem on *Womanhood* must echo in every thoughtful heart. But the assumption of personal privilege and authority over others, and "affinity" theories, have stranded him on a barren shore.

There is an avowed re-incarnation of Buddha in the United States, and an avowed re-incarnation of Christ. Both have followers; both have been interviewed and said their best. They and others like unto them have had signs, illuminations, knowledge not common to men, and events pointing in a marked way to this their final destiny. There has even been a whisper here and there of supernatural births. But they lacked the clear-seeing eye which could reduce these facts to their right order, and interpret them aright. Kings and potentates appear, and dreamers of dreams, but there is never a prophet or Daniel in their midst. And the result is sorry to behold, for each seems to be putting the crown upon his own head.

If Theosophy had done nothing else, it would have made a demand on human gratitude in placing the truth and falsehood of these psy-

chic experiences, unfoldments, or delusions as the case might be, plainly before the people, and explaining their *rationale.* It showed a plane of manhood, and proved it unassailably to a number of persons, which transcends any powers or capacities of the inspirational psychic who may imagine himself or herself to be a messenger to the world at large. It placed personal purity on a level which barred out nine-tenths of these claimants from all thought of their presumed inheritance, and showed that such a condition of purity, far transcending any popular idea of such virtue, was the absolute and all-essential basis of spiritual insight and attainment. It swept the ground from under the feet of those poor men and women who had been listening to the so-called messages from the angels, that they were the chosen of heaven, and were to accomplish world-wide missions. The Joan of Arcs, the Christs, the Buddhas, the Michaels, were fain to see truths they had not dreamed of, and gifts they had never possessed, exercised in silence and with potent force by men whose names were unknown even to history, and recognised only by hidden disciples, or their peers. Something higher was placed before the sight of these eager reformers than fame: it was truth. Something higher than the most purified union between even one man and one woman in the most spiritual of sympathies, was shown; it was the immortal union of the soul of man with God.

Wherever Theosophy spreads, there it is impossible for the deluded to mislead, or the deluded to follow. It opens a new path, a forgotten philosophy which has lived through the ages, a knowledge of the psychic nature of man, which reveals alike the true status of the Catholic saint, and the spiritualistic medium the Church condemns. It gathers reformers together, throws light on their way, and teaches them how to work towards a desirable end with most effect, but forbids any to assume a crown or sceptre, and no less delivers from a futile crown of thorns. Mesmerisms and astral influences fall back, and the sky grows clear enough for higher light. It hushes the "Lo here! and lo there!" and declares the Christ, like the kingdom of heaven, to be within. It guards and applies every aspiration and capacity to serve humanity in any man, and shows him how. It overthrows the giddy pedestal, and safely cares for the human being on solid ground. Hence, in this way, and in all other ways, it is the truest deliverer and saviour of our time.

To enumerate the various "messiahs" and their beliefs and works would fill volumes. It is endless. When claims conflict, all, on the face of it, cannot be true. Some have taught less error than others. It is almost the only distinction. And some have had fine powers imperilled and paralysed by leanings they did not understand.

Of one thing, rationally-minded people, apart from Theosophists, may be sure. And that is, service for humanity is its all-sufficient reward; and that empty jars are the most resonant of sound. To know a very little of the philosophy of life, of man's power to redeem wrongs and to teach others, to perceive how to thread the tangled maze of existence on this globe, and to accomplish aught of lasting and *spiritual* benefit, is to annihilate all desire or thought of posing as a heaven-sent saviour of the people. For a very little self-knowledge is a leveller indeed, and more democratic than the most ultra-radical can desire. The best practical reformers of the outside abuses we have known, such as slavery, deprivation of the rights of woman, legal tyrannies, oppressions of the poor, have never dreamed of posing as Messiahs. Honor, worthless as it is, followed them unsought, for a tree is known by its fruits, and to this day "their works do follow them." To the soul spending itself for others those grand words of the poet may be addressed evermore:—

> Take comfort—thou hast left behind
> Powers that will work for thee; air, earth, and skies;
> There's not a breathing of the common wind
> That will forget thee—thou hast great allies;
> Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
> And love, and man's unconquerable mind!

With the advent of Theosophy, the Messiah-craze surely has had its day, and sees its doom. For if it teaches, or has taught, one thing more plainly than another, it is that the "first shall be last, and the last first." And in the face of genuine spiritual growth, and true illumination, the Theosophist grows in power to most truly befriend and help his fellows, while he becomes the most humble, the most silent, the most guarded of men.

Saviours to their race, in a sense, have lived and will live. Rarely has one been known. Rare has been the occasion when thus to be known has been either expedient or possible. Therefore, fools alone will rush in "where angels fear to tread." SPECTATOR

THE DYNAMICS OF BROTHERHOOD

IN this day of clashing ideologies, when every organized body of men, whether racial, social, or religious, is shouting forth to the world the superior virtues of its own cult, it is refreshing to reflect that in the heart of each man are to be found the same elements, good and bad, of simple human nature. This common human heartbeat is like the undertone of a great musical movement, or the steady flow of water in the deep river bed beneath the waves and ripples of its troubled surface. It is the substratum of all ideologies, the background of changing creeds and governments, the source and sustainer of true progress. Yet, in spite of this fact, the attention of men is centered almost entirely on the external and the unimportant, on the ever-changing bubbles of life as they expand and burst on the universal stream of time.

One "raised" in one of the numerous religious sects is often led to believe that if all other men belonged to the same sect the character of the race would be stronger, and the world would be a better place in which to live. The Socialist, Communist, Anarchist, or Democrat is told by his leaders that the basic cause of most, if not all, of our woes is that other men do not think as he does. Hence the Communist works day and night to convert all men to Communism; the Socialist puts forth his ideas as the only ones worthy of support; Protestant, Catholic, Hindu, Jew—each and all secretly convinced, even when not outwardly announcing, that he alone is on the royal pathway to truth. But in all races and creeds are to be found both sages and thieves, pure men and sensual ones, the honest and the dishonest—is not this proof that the source of all character is man himself, and not the cult?

A moment's reflection should show us that we are prone to place undue emphasis on differences of race and creed, and that we close our eyes to what men have in common. Where is the man who has not experienced the warmth of heart that comes from reading the stories and folklore of simple peoples in other lands, and seeing depicted there the identical loves and hates and hopes and fears and joys and sorrows which we know to exist within ourselves? The

basic nature of man is neither Christian nor Jew, Japanese nor French, Communist nor Capitalist. These are mere outer forms or shells, the mental or material coverings of the soul, which present to the superficial observer the hateful delusions of separateness. We fail to distinguish between the simple fact that we are human beings —the simple feeling, "I am a man"—and the complex thought, "I am a Baptist," or "a Democrat," or "a Jew." The god-like qualities in men come not from the "complexities" of race or creed or organization, but from the heart and soul of man himself. And he who takes time to look deep within the hearts of others will discover there hidden elements of kinship. Forgetting differences and searching for similarities, he will find in each a being like himself, a brother human soul, who fights the same battles, suffers the same defects, enjoys the same victories.

It is not necessary that all men look and think alike, that they worship at the same temple, for peace and harmony to reign in the world. Harmony comes not through identity, but through the balancing of contrary things. What kind of a conductor would one be who demanded that all members of the orchestra play the same instruments, and sound the same notes of the scale? Harmony is the result of the sounding together of different notes, each playing his own part and leaving all others to do the same.

If each human being, regardless of heritage or belief, would perform sincerely what he has to do, universal harmony would be the result. If men would cease to be overly concerned with the duties of their neighbors, whether personal or national, three-fourths of all causes for strife would vanish into thin air. It is not the decree of life that all men be Christian, Buddhist, Communist, or Materialist. The Laws of Brotherhood require only that each, in his proper place, serve his fellow-men, that he cultivate the noble qualities of his nature and strive to overcome the ignoble, that he dare to think and act for himself; that he measure progress, not in terms of strong governments and rich churches, but in terms of the leavening influence of the heart. The only lasting reform will be that which is accomplished from within by each man for himself—not through external revolt or the forced adoption of utopian schemes, but through the evolving of lines of action consonant with the needs of the soul.

It is not that men should cease to be concerned with the problems of the day, but rather that they approach them from a saner, more basic, point of view. It is not that they should abandon their religious or political affiliations and beliefs, but simply that they try to think and feel and act from a deeper, purer level of their being than that in which resides their sectarianism. If only a few individuals, of whatever stripe, think of themselves and all others as simple human beings, without racial or religious brandings, a dynamic impulse toward Brotherhood will have been given. Following the example of the few, masses of men will then begin to place less and less emphasis on external differences, and will finally realize that the common human heart is the source of all inspiration, the prompter of action, the sustainer of good, and the promise of a better world in the future.

THE STAIR TO DEVELOPMENT

Is it not true that now we can look back upon and smile at anything "bad" that ever happened to us in the past? It looked *awful* at the time, but it has passed, and we can see that from those very things came something of gain, of strength and wisdom. Under the law no one can meet with an obstacle which he is not able to overcome; the obstacle is but an opportunity for him to get rid of some defect which he now possesses. Often the very things which seem the most difficult for us prove to be the most beneficent.

Those who stand the greatest chance of loss in the future are those who have the easy times. When one has "good" Karma—that is, when everything is coming his way—he is prone to take the ease of it and flow with the current of the river, missing many an opportunity to *do* good. Through these errors of omission, which are as bad as any errors of commission, he fails to understand that he had diminished his own stock of good Karma and must of necessity share in the evil which flows from his lack of appreciation of the situation and his opportunity. We need never fear our opportunities, but should always act up to them, relying on the law of our own spiritual being to carry us through anything and everything. The Path is within ourselves, not outside; each of us is the stair to his own development. —ROBERT CROSBIE

SCIENCE NEWS AND NOTES

Subtleties of Speech

IN his *Pedigree of Man,* Haeckel argued that speech arose gradually from a few simple crude animal sounds. This facile theory was denied by the famous Max Müller, amongst others. In the tradition of scholarship, another work has appeared this year in Switzerland (Berne: A. Francke), in which Prof. G. Révész, of Amsterdam University, emphasizes the great importance of his "contact theory" *(Ursprung und Vorgeschichte der Sprache).* He considers human speech to be a system of symbolical sounds, and explains the evolution of speech as due to man's urge to express his wishes and needs in all cases of contact, actual or mental, with his fellows. His theory comes under heavy fire from a reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement* (July 3, 1948), who complains that while Dr. Révész refers often to Darwin, he does not mention the great naturalist's observation that Man's organs of articulation tend to move in sympathy with his hands. It sounds incredible; but we are solemnly informed by this critic that, in the light of recent philological evidence, the story of human speech is based upon the fact "that all intelligent animals express their ideas (as distinct from their emotions) by pantomime."

Because the higher apes express themselves by cries and signs, the philologist obsessed by Darwinism feels that early man must have "talked" by mimicry. The *Times* reviewer's version:

> But as primitive man was pantomiming his ideas, and singing or grunting or sighing his expressions of emotion, he was also unconsciously moving his tongue, lips and jaws in sympathy with the pantomimic actions of his hands. These unconscious mouth movements would, of themselves, have produced no sounds; but if the pantomimer made an emotional cry or sigh while he was pantomiming, as he well might in order to draw attention to his pantomimic signs, or to express his eagerness to be understood, then the gesticulations of his mouth would have been bound to modify in a very striking way the character of the emotional sound. Thus, closing the lips in sympathy with the hand-gesture of grabbing would suddenly cut off the emotional sound; a wide-open mouth in sympathy with widely spread arms, meaning *large* or *far,* would produce what we call the vowel sound *ah;* and so on.

Fantastic as this gesture theory is as an explanation of the origin of speech, it is equalled by the draughts upon our credulity demanded by the "scientific" interpretation of the source of root words. Long ago it was said that "A *human* brain is necessary for human speech" (*S.D.* II, 661); but this obvious fact leaves our philologists supremely indifferent. The *Times* reviewer continues to speculate.

> At later stages of human development all the commonly occurring ideas of actions, objects, qualities, etc. would be represented by relatively simple hand-gestures, each referring to some salient characteristic of the action, object, or idea, and each hand-gesture would automatically give rise to a more or less corresponding mouth gesture. These gestures of articulation would constitute the root words from which the spoken language was developed.

It is greatly to Dr. Révész's credit that nowhere in his work does he attach any importance to the gestures of articulation which are supposed by modern theorists to carry the meaning of all words. It is possible that he does not even subscribe to the general belief that speech did not become common until some 15,000 years ago! Perhaps he is aware of the vital difficulty mentioned by Mme. Blavatsky in summing up the linguistic case against the "ape-ancestor":

> Languages have their phases of growth, etc., like all else in nature. It is almost certain that the great linguistic families pass through three stages. (1) All words are roots and merely placed in juxtaposition (Radical languages). (2) One root defines the other, and becomes merely a determinative element (Agglutinative). (3) The determinative element (the determinating meaning of which has long lapsed) unites into a whole with the formative element (Inflected).
>
> The problem then is: Whence these ROOTS? Max Müller argues that the existence of these *ready-made materials of speech* is a proof that man cannot be the crown of a long organic series. This *potentiality of forming roots* is the great crux which materialists almost invariably avoid. (*S.D.* II, 662.)

The esoteric philosophy claims an immensely greater antiquity for the development of speech than is granted by modern scholarship. Starting with monosyllabic speech at the close of the civilization that occupied Lemuria, there later evolved the agglutinative languages of some of the Atlantis races (*Rakshasi Bhasa* in old Sanskrit works), leaving as an heirloom to the nascent Aryan Race

the highly-developed inflectional languages—"the agglutinative decayed, and remained as a fragmentary fossil idiom scattered now, and nearly limited to the aboriginal tribes of America" (*S.D.* II, 199). Dr. Révész is on the side of the angels when he suggests that man expressed his wishes and needs by articulate speech rather than by pantomime because of his "creative activity," his ability to make vocal calls, and his innate sense of form, which exercised its language-forming influence. This is near to saying (much to the horror of his reviewer!) that "the spirituality of man begat language." This is anti-Darwinism with a vengeance! *Lux in tenebris!*

Man's power to grasp and communicate ideas by means of *symbols* is seldom given sufficient credit by philologists in reconstructing the origin of language. Yet, except for the clairvoyance naturally employed by all human beings in some degree, the transmission of thoughts from one mind to another would be impossible. Mere sounds, no matter how intricate, can never do more than represent ideas: the subtle perception of the thought *associated* with a word—the very possibility of relating a sign to a subjective reality —is the faculty upon which language depends, and from which it can almost be said to originate. Without the resident power to comprehend the use of symbols, no human being could learn a language. In this connection, it should be noted that the thousands of filmgoers who saw "Johnny Belinda" had a demonstration of natural clairvoyance which, if pondered upon, will do much to enlarge the popular conception of the mind's powers. The deaf-mute's first lesson in "gesture-speech" did not introduce ideas to her mind, but provided a means of expressing ideas already conceived.

Of interest to theosophists is the fact that early researches into the phenomenon of gesture-speech were reported to readers of *The Theosophist* (March and August, 1880), and Oriental scholars were several times invited through its pages to collaborate with the work of Garrick Mallery of the Ethnological Bureau of the Smithsonian Institution. Col. Mallery had discovered, in studying over 800 signs collected from different parts of the American continent over a hundred-year period, that many of the American tribes which gestured most freely had "a copious vocabulary with highly inflected parts of speech." The preponderance of evidence showed "that man, when in possession of all his faculties, did not make a deliberate

choice between voice and gesture, both being originally instinctive, as both are now; and there never was a time when one was used to the exclusion of the other."

Another series of *Theosophist* articles reviews a book by a T.S. member, entitled (evidently in imitation of H. P. Blavatsky's first work) *Linguistics Unveiled.* The book's thesis, as summarized in the review, was "that the so-called Aryan, Indo-European or Indo-Germanic Family of languages are one and all derived from an obscure Semitic tongue, viz., the Phoenician, the language of Carthage, and of that enterprising race." In the course of a scholarly demolition of this hypothesis occurs a paragraph worth quoting as evidence of the language difficulties imposed, for example, on the writers of the Hebrew Scriptures—and upon such a teacher as Jesus—difficulties comparable to those H. P. Blavatsky encountered even in English, the most flexible of modern languages.

> The paucity of the roots [of the Semitic languages] and the artificiality of the formation of derivations and inflexions on a triliteral basis render the languages, which do not differ much from one another, so stiff and heavy that although one of them at least, the Arabic, is the richest in literature of them all, they cannot be compared with the pliancy, freedom and the extreme adaptability to the wants of the human mind which distinguish the roots and the inflectional changes of the Aryan languages. Hence the Semites have recourse to, very often, the most elaborate metaphors for the most common conception, which indeed add a certain grandeur and dignity to their style, highly typical of their serious and at times melancholy mode of life and turn of mind.
>
> This is what Canon Farrar says regarding this family in his "Origin of Language": "They are simple and rigid, metallic rather than fluid; physical and sensuous in their character, deficient in abstraction and almost incapable of metaphysical accuracy. The roots are triliteral in form and so few in number that their meanings are generally vague, being in fact a series of metaphorical applications of some sensible perception. They are deficient in style and perspective; they are, as Ewald observes, lyric and poetic rather than oratorical and epic; they are the best means of showing us the primitive tendencies of language; they may be compared to the utterances of a fair and intelligent infancy retained in a manhood which has not fulfilled the brilliant promise of its early days." (*Theosophist,* May, 1884.)

It is pointed out that the Sanscrit alphabet is held by some philologists to be highly scientific and "consonant with the 'physiology

of the human voice'." And the *Theosophist* writer further suggests that the "primitive language—the name of which I have learnt from the esteemed Editor of this journal, but has not yet been published —*was* and *is* the language of the *holy,* the immortals, the Dhyan Chohans, our Param Gurus." (Cf. *Secret Doctrine* references to "Senzar.")

As is usual in *The Theosophist,* the most valuable passage in the article quoted appears in a footnote. The subject is the Onomatopoeic Theory, which holds that language was evolved not only from the expression of sudden emotions and desires or commands, but also from words formed by imitating sounds: "A sound is perceived and reproduced and gives to the Intellect 'a fixed mark of the object perceived'." A footnote explores the theory from the standpoint of Occult Philosophy:

> Noise or external natural sounds being the very "fons et origo" of the Onomatopoeic Theory, Occultism would show . . . that there are many more sounds than "what meet the ear" physical. These sounds are the products of the ethereal and highly subtle vibrations of the Universal *Akash* of the Occultists that can only be perceived by the trained ear of the "clairaudient" Chelas and Adepts, and therefore of the progenitors of the human race whose psychic clairaudient powers far transcended those audient and consequently imperfect powers which we are at present endowed with. These primitive Progenitors had therefore inexhaustible materials from which they could frame Language, for to them everything in nature was sonorous, ringing, speaking in no subdued accents. Nay more—even the thought-processes, cerebrational, intellectual, must have emitted no uncertain sounds easily audible to their supremely sensitive auditory nerves. Hence it is that the higher Chelas and our illustrious Gurus are great thought-readers. (*Theosophist,* June, 1884.)

Readers interested in carrying this speculation further are referred to *The Secret Doctrine,* especially Part II, Book I, on the Evolution of Symbolism, and the sections on Stanza IV (I, 93 et ff.). Book II, on the evolution of man, discusses (beginning at p. 289) the Races with the "Third Eye"—spiritual clairvoyance—with which may perhaps be correlated a "third ear" receptive to Akasic sound.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—

Is there any reason why we should try to preserve good appearances? Is this not just another form of hypocrisy?

It may be, and if so, should not be encouraged. Yet often a sincere attempt to preserve good external relations with others acts to create a true feeling of amity. This is an argument for the continuation and extension of the outer forms of courtesy and consideration (if done with kindly feelings, of course), for the very effort made to give kindness a concrete expression creates a force which impels the recipient to respond in kind.

This question raises another point, however, connected in a way with the question asked last month about self-confidence. Americans seem especially disposed, temperamentally, to take great stock in appearances. We are a people who believe in "selling ourselves" to others by big talk and enthusiastic vaporings that pass for plans, and so we create an impression of self-confidence which makes less bombastic peoples appear timid, unimaginative, and destined for a lowly end—while a rosy future waits for us just around the corner. Cultivating this kind of "good appearances" carries with it great danger, both for the man who does it and the men he does it to, for such gifts of personality can be tragically elusive.

Could it be said that the use of talking animals in cartoons and stories helps a child to understand Nature?

Just what made people first indulge in the indiscriminate vocalization of animal stories we don't know. Possibly it came about as a result of the idea that children would be more interested in animals if the animals were made "more human," and like themselves. If this was the case, we hardly think the action was justified, because the child is not repelled—as adults more frequently are—by the unknown and unfamiliar.

The discovery of the wonders of Nature, in any event, is not dependent on making animals speak, any more than it would be on making a tree take up its roots and move from one place to another. There are more than sufficient marvels to be noted without adding "false notes" to the child's book of knowledge. Perhaps most marvel-

ous of all, and of particular value for "city folks" to know, is the intense stillness with which Nature accomplishes her miracles. Speech —even human, intelligent speech, let alone the coarse and stupid talk so often put into animals' mouths—is a plodding and pedestrian method of communication compared to telepathy, and even animals employ a kind of psychic communication or "telepathy" among themselves.

As for the current cartoons that "enliven" movie theater fare, they should hardly be mentioned in any discussion of how to better understand Nature, since they seem to have no elements of the natural in them. We defy anyone to find *real* similarities between "Donald Duck" and his namesakes on the still ponds of a twilight countryside. Such features show the extreme of what most "talking animal" sequences or stories tend to do; they rather degrade the human being to the animal level than raise the animal closer to the human. If we were to use the medium of speech (which in truth is reserved for *manasic* beings) in connection with animals, we at least should keep the animals' speech free from strictly human overtones and emotions, just as the animals themselves, in their wild and natural state, are quite untouched by the feelings we humans are apt to impute to them. More documentaries like *Louisiana Story* and *Arctic Fury* and contact with real nature (preferably not through the medium of a noisy, smelly zoo)—are necessary antidotes to a Donald-Duck-ridden culture, for every child and adult can discover that truth *is* stranger and more wonderful, usually, than fiction.

How important is consistency in one's life?

People sometimes seem to make consistency more important than it really is. If we attempt to preserve consistency—or our "predictableness" in others' eyes—at the cost of our own inner perception of what is right at that moment, we are indulging what Emerson called a "foolish consistency—the hobgoblin of little minds." Of course, consistency is a word with two faces: it presents, in one aspect, the virtue of holding to a chosen course or decision in spite of the unfavorable circumstances which may arise; on the other hand, it may suggest the "vice" of continuing on a given course as a matter of habit or convenience, instead of setting up new patterns and advancing toward new goals. Consistency is lauded, often, by those

who lack the *courage* or the self-honesty to change. We should not let ourselves be bound by a habit we have built up, any more than we should by other kinds of possessions.

The consistency that is important may very well not be evident to the people around us who observe our lives from "the outside." That consistency comes from moral and mental effort concentrated in a single direction, and there maintained. This kind of single-pointedness can be held intact regardless of the number and diversity of, or seeming conflict between, the person's outward activities.

We may say that all human beings have the same potential for achieving things, but the fact is that some people are "creative," and some are not; and there doesn't seem to be any way to develop that quality if it isn't there to begin with.

We shall take exception to the statement that "some people are 'creative,' and some are not," for it is a central conception of the theosophical philosophy (and a fact easy to verify in our own experience) that every human being is creative. Sometimes we use the word "creative," referring to abilities in the fine arts, for instance, a creative person is able to draw, write, model, play a musical instrument, etc. If this is the kind of creativity the questioner means, he must admit that all human beings share those qualities *in some degree,* and that everyone can increase the degree by application of his will to the task. If the fine arts don't appeal to us, gardening can be just as "creative," and housekeeping, too, for that matter!

The point is that we need to abolish in ourselves that hopeless, left-out-in-the-cold feeling of self-pity—looking at other people's capacities through rose-colored glasses, and surveying our own through the blue lenses. Often we are drawn to call another person "creative," not primarily because of his particular skill, but rather because he has a certain vivacity and aliveness, an eagerness to meet life and discover new things in it. In proof of this, we should notice that we never worry about our "creativity" when *we* are feeling an eagerness and purposefulness toward life.

Perhaps the word "creative" should be dropped, and "constructive" substituted for it. Is it not more important—and more rewarding—to be constructive with every thing we use and every person we meet, than to be airily and esthetically creative?

"MIRZA MURAD ALI BEG"

EASTERN Scriptures, attaching an arresting metaphor to a statement of moral law, say that at every step on the road to knowledge two ways open before the traveler: the one takes him forward on his chosen Path, but the other leads him off—whether at a slight or a sharp angle. That is, the conscious choice of a spiritual goal is not made once and for all time, but must be reaffirmed in every motive, in each thought, word, and deed, if progress is to be continuous. In the same vein, H. P. Blavatsky has written that "Every pledge or promise unless built upon four pillars —absolute sincerity, unflinching determination, unselfishness of purpose, and *moral power,* which makes the fourth support and equipoises the three other pillars—is an insecure building."

Theosophy being a philosophy of spiritual evolution, study of its doctrines inevitably suggests to some minds the possibility of orienting everyday life around the fundamental laws of the moral world, that is, attempting to meet karma consciously and to make all aspirations (and eventually all actions) point toward a single goal. This natural extension of theosophic study is provided for by the literature on practical Theosophy, on disciples (*chelas* in Sanscrit) and the "higher life," as well as in the delineation of the wise man reiterated, for example, throughout the *Bhagavad-Gita.* Nor are the difficulties of such an undertaking ever minimized by the true Teacher. Specific warnings are many, and the sense is well conveyed in Christina Rossetti's famous lines:

> Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
> Yes, to the very end.
> Does the journey take the whole long day?
> From morn to night, my friend.

On the way to wisdom, there are those who try—and those who fail to try again. Since the wisdom sought is universal, so also are the experiences and trials to be passed through, and, philosophically considered, the tales of failure may be as illuminating as the records of success. Impersonally related *after the result is known*—usually not until the death of the personality involved—the moral history

of one weakened by doubt and despair, or by the materialism of animal desires and ignoble emotions, can serve as a graphic warning to others. And that service, though involuntary on the part of the unfortunate principal, is itself a karmic merit, a debt owed by all who have profited by observation and have learned without repeating the experience of others.

One such "warning" is "Mirza Murad Ali Beg," chiefly remembered by theosophical students as the writer of "The 'Elixir of Life'" (see p. 411, this issue). The discreet phrases of "G.M." (standing for Godolphin Mitford) in the Introduction, indicating that he *was* for a few years under training by Adept-Teachers, are supplemented by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine.* She relates that Godolphin Mitford, later in life Murad Ali Beg, was "born in India, the son of a Missionary . . . converted to Islam, and died a Mahomedan in 1884. He was a most extraordinary Mystic, of a great learning and remarkable intelligence. But he left the Right Path and forthwith fell under Karmic retribution" (II, 514 fn.). Earlier in the same volume, Mme. Blavatsky refers to Murad Ali as "one who, confusing the planes of existence and consciousness, fell a victim to it," and she appends a brief history in a footnote. She quotes from his article, "War in Heaven," in order "to show where it dissents from theosophic teachings; otherwise it would be quoted some day against us, as everything published in the *Theosophist* generally is," and she observes that it is written—

> By an Englishman whose erratic genius killed him. The son of a Protestant clergyman, he became a Mahomedan, then a rabid atheist, and after meeting with a *master,* a Guru, he became a mystic; then a theosophist who doubted, despaired; threw up *white* for *black* magic, went insane and joined the Roman Church. Then again turning around, anathematized her, re-became an atheist, and died cursing humanity, knowledge, and God, in whom he had ceased to believe. Furnished with all the esoteric data to write his "War in Heaven," he made a semi-political article out of it, mixing Malthus with Satan, and Darwin with the astral light. Peace be to his—Shell. He is a warning to the chelas who fail. (*Secret Doctrine,* II, 244-5 fn.)

Murad Ali was known to *Theosophist* readers as the author of several long articles on the "Shemitic" myths. Certain lines of interest and emphasis are discernible in these articles, which help

explain the misconceptions with which their author later left the Theosophical Society. "Beni Elohim, the Children of the Gods" (*Theosophist,* April and May, 1881) drew particular attention to "the 'angels' who intrigued with the daughters of Adam," and this theme drew forth various letters and replies in August, 1881, January, 1882, and April, 1882. In June, 1881, appeared Murad Ali's "No More Death!" contrasting Theosophy and Materialism, and presenting the concept of "vital permanency," by the use of "the more *etherial* properties of the atoms." A forerunner of "The 'Elixir of Life'," "No More Death!" concludes with a paradox which may be true metaphorically, but which Murad Ali seems to recommend literally:

> . . . the inactive *cannot* create, cannot become visible, cannot, as the absolute negation of properties, become *concrete,* and is therefore in itself *nihil.* Hence the inherent futility and idiocy of all attempts, religious, political, or social, to reduce various phases of the life of the universe to a condition of absolute order and stability and uniformity. . . . Disorder is the order of the universe, strife is life, stagnation means corruption—the desire for "peace" is the desire for *death.*

Murad Ali's next *Theosophist* article was "The Mother-land of Nations" (August and September, 1881), which suggests *"some mystery"* in the idea of India, the Mother-land, and obliquely ventures the theory that a *pre*-Aryan people of great occult powers was the energizing force behind the Aryan expansion and that this other race is somehow connected with the later Jewish tribes. It is difficult to tell what basis the author finds for this theory, but *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 200, 426, 470-1) separates the origin of the Jews from the Mahabharatean War by hundreds of thousands of years. The war between the Aryan races, "pious and meditative (*yoga*-contemplation)," and the descendants of the first giant races, or the sorcerers, lasted 900,000 years (*S.D.* II, 395, and 371 fn.), and is the prototype of all myths of the "War in Heaven"—the subject of Murad Ali's next article.

"The War in Heaven" (appearing in the issues of October through December, 1881), another long and involved discourse, begins with a recapitulation of "Beni Elohim," which, the author states, was written "to prove that in the minds of the primitive Shemites 'the

Elohim' were viewed as a tribe of anthropomorphous immortals, who ate and drank, loved and hated, married and bore children exactly as we on earth do." It is thus apparent that whatever "esoteric" material was furnished Murad Ali for this article, he did not make correct use of it, for his interpretation of the powers of the Elohim is wide of the mark. *The Secret Doctrine* links the Elohim with the Dhyanis, "living and intelligent Powers," and teaches that "the *surviving Entity in us* is partly the direct emanation from, and partly *those celestial Entities themselves*" (*S.D.* I, 230). The minds of men are "Children of the Gods," of "Light," not because the Spiritual Intelligences live, move and have their being "as we on earth do," but because of the Promethean sacrifice and the "lighting up" of Manas.

It also appears from "The War in Heaven" that Murad Ali believed in "an absolute annihilation, moral, physical, material and spiritual, of conscious existence and its elements alike," and that he, in common with others, conceived this to be the meaning of Nirvana. His article concludes on the note of rebellion against "*purposeless* asceticism," although he remarks that "Theosophic or Aryan asceticism bears a different Rationale"—and he again enters a protest against the idea of "peace":

> We shall never be more happy till we acknowledge the necessity of *both* the Static Inertia and the Active Energy—that Jehovah and Satan are only brothers, struggling in a pleasant love-wrestle of exercise, the outcome of which is the Visible Universe . . . and [admit] that, on earth, Struggle and Individualism are at least as praiseworthy as Passivity and Unity—Effort and Resistance as little abhorrent—as little *"bad"*—as Quiescence and Submission.

This pre-occupation with the opposing principle, and with the pairs of opposites as *things in themselves* is a far cry from the *Bhagavad-Gita's* description of the wise man who is constantly engaged in action, although "he really doeth nothing," and who "is free from the influence of the 'pairs of opposites'." Murad Ali's view may be contrasted with the *philosophical* significance of Satan and the Rebellious Gods as given in *The Secret Doctrine,* for, in discussing the esoteric interpretation, H. P. Blavatsky takes issue especially with "Rabbinical Wisdom—than which there is none more positive, materialistic, or grossly terrestrial, as it brings every-

thing down to physiological mysteries" (II, 247). H.P.B. writes that Satan and Lucifer, or "Light-Bearer," is in us: "it is our *Mind*—our tempter and Redeemer, our intelligent liberator and Saviour from pure animalism. Without this principle—the emanation of the very essence of the pure divine principle *Mahat* (Intelligence), which radiates direct from the *Divine Mind*—we would be surely no better than animals" (II, 513).

At the close of "The War in Heaven," Murad Ali mentions other studies he intended to submit to *The Theosophist,* but no further articles under his name seem to have appeared. "The 'Elixir of Life'," as mentioned above, was published simply over the initials "G.M."—a reticence appropriate to *"a Chela's Diary,"* in view of the occult rule "against relating your progress in the higher life *in this life"* (Judge *Letters,* p. 167). A year later appeared the first of H.P.B.'s articles on chelaship, "Chelas and Lay Chelas," and this will bear rereading in the light of Murad Ali's history, for his case appears to be the first of the "sad failures" there enumerated (THEOSOPHY XXXI, 203).

The final chapter in Murad Ali's theosophical career is an article by Damodar Mavalankar, "White and Black Magic," addressed to "Mirza Moorad Alee Beg, Ex-F.T.S." (*Theosophist,* Supplement, February, 1884), in answer to charges the latter had recently brought against the Society. That Murad Ali's philosophical errors in no way affected what philosophic truths he had supported in "The 'Elixir of Life'," is evident from the fact that Damodar quotes that article* in correcting the misconceptions of the "Ex-F.T.S." Damodar begins by recalling that the first time Murad Ali came to the T.S. headquarters in Bombay, he told Damodar, in effect, "If you ever want to progress on the right path, beware of sensual appetites dragging you down, and above all take care of the *Brothers of the Shadow, the Sorcerers,* with some of whom I have had personal dealings, to which fact I trace all my present suffering, struggle, and misery." Damodar resumes:

> I therefore stand aghast now at reading:—"The Theosophist leaders never 'discouraged' but rather encouraged me in such

*Also quoted by Damodar in "Contemplation," in the same issue of *The Theosophist* (see THEOSOPHY XXXVI, 119). Passages used by Damodar have not been reproduced in the present reprint.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

practices (of black magic)"—as Mirza Moorad Alee says in his letter under consideration. I cannot believe he is wilfully misrepresenting facts, but will fain attribute his present forgetfulness to mental aberration, caused by nervous exhaustion brought on by his futile struggle to get over the horrors of black magic and rise up to the spiritual glories of an Adept. When he joined us he had already opened the door and was gone too far to be able to shut it against the workings of the sorcerers with whom he had had "personal dealings." I only pity his fall and hope he will not have to share the fate of all black magicians.

Next, Damodar takes up the question of Nirvana, and is at pains to show that it "*is* annihilation, not of the spiritual Ego, but of the lower principles in man, of the animal Soul, the personality which must perish." This, he points out, is clearly taught in "Fragments of Occult Truth" and in "other literature on Esoteric Theosophy":

> The powers of black magic are due to the will-power engendered by a concentrated form of selfishness. This is possible only when the *Manas* . . . resides very firmly in his lower principles. . . . Of course, the greater the powers of a black magician, the greater must be his selfishness. The energy of cohesion being thus very powerful, it must take a very long period before annihilation is complete. For aught we know, it (not his physical body which cannot live so long) may extend over thousands—nay a million—of years. The tendency for evil is there; the desire for mischief is strong: but there are no means for the gratification of sensual appetites: and the miserable being suffers the throes of dissolution for a very, very long period until he is totally annihilated.

Referring to Murad Ali's own article without disclosing its authorship, Damodar contrasts the case of the white magician who "by his training as described in the *Elixir of Life,* gradually kills his lower principles, without any suffering, thus extending over a long period their dissolution; and his *Manas* identifies itself with his higher—the sixth and seventh—principles. . . . It is the black magician whose lot is annihilation; while the *adept,* the white magician, enjoys the blissful condition of absolute existence where there is no pain or pleasure, no sorrow or joy, since these are all relative terms, and the state is one of supreme bliss; in short, the latter enjoys an immortality of life."

THE "ELIXIR OF LIFE"

(From a Chela's Diary)

By G____ M____ F.T.S.

"And Enoch walked with the Elohim. And the Elohim took him."—Genesis

(The curious information—for whatsoever else the world may think of it, it will doubtless be acknowledged to be that—contained in the article that follows, merits a few words of introduction. The details given in it on the subject of what has always been considered as one of the darkest and most strictly guarded of the mysteries of initiation into Occultism—from the days of the *Rishis* until these of the Theosophical Society—came to the knowledge of the author in a way that would seem to the ordinary run of Europeans strange and supernatural. He himself, however, we may assure the reader, is a most thorough disbeliever in the *Supernatural,* though he has learned too much to limit the capabilities of the *natural* as some do. Further, he has to make the following confession of his own belief. It will be apparent, from a careful perusal of the facts, that if the matter be really as stated herein, the author cannot himself be an adept of high grade, as the article in such a case *would never have been written.* Nor does he pretend to be one. He is, or rather was, for a few years an humble *Chela.* Hence, the converse must consequently be also true, that as regards the higher stages of the mystery he can have no personal experience, but speaks of it only as a close observer left to his own surmises—and no more. He may, therefore, boldly state that during, and notwithstanding, his unfortunately rather too short stay with some Adepts, he has by actual experiment and observation verified some of the less transcendental or incipient parts of the "Course." And, though it will be impossible for him to give positive testimony as to what lies beyond, he may yet mention that all his own course of study, training and experience, long, severe and dangerous as

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NOTE.—This article was first published in *The Theosophist,* March and April, 1882. At the time, A. P. Sinnett's Teacher cautioned him that the article "contains references and explanations, the haziness of which may remind you of a man who stealthily approaching gives him [one] a hit upon his back, and then runs away; as they most undeniably belong to the genus of those 'Fortunes' that come to one like a thief by night and during one's sleep, and go back, finding no one to respond to the offer. . . . As usual, it is an indiscretion, which, however, I have allowed to remain as there are few, if any, who will understand the hint contained. . . ." The present reprint, which will appear in three installments, is somewhat condensed, in the interests of space.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

it has often been, leads him to the conviction that everything is really as stated,—save some details *purposely veiled.* For causes which cannot be explained to the public, he himself may be unable or unwilling to use the secret he has gained access to. Still he is permitted by one to whom all his reverential affection and gratitude are due—his last Guru—to divulge for the benefit of Science and Man, and specially for the good of those who are courageous enough to personally make the experiment, the following astounding particulars of the occult methods for prolonging life to a period far beyond the common.—ED.)

WE Asiatics have a proverb, probably handed down to us, and by the Hindus repeated ignorantly as to its esoteric meaning. It has been known ever since the old Rishis mingled familiarly with the simple and noble people they taught and led on. Devas had whispered into every man's ear, *Thou only* —if thou wilt—art "immortal." Combine with this the saying of a Western author that if any man could just realise for an instant that he had to die some day, he would die that instant. The *Illuminated* will perceive that between these two sayings, rightly understood, stands revealed the whole secret of *Longevity.* We only die when our will ceases to be strong enough to make us live. In the majority of cases, death comes when the torture and vital exhaustion accompanying a rapid change in our physical conditions become so intense as to weaken, for one single instant, our "clutch on life," or the tenacity of the *Will* to exist. Till then, however severe may be the disease, however sharp the pang, we are only sick or wounded, as the case may be. This explains the cases of sudden deaths from joy, fright, pain, grief, or such other causes. The sense of a life-task consummated, of the worthlessness of one's existence, *if strongly realised,* produces death as surely as poison or a rifle-bullet. On the other hand, a stern determination to continue to live, has, in fact, carried many through *the crises* of the most severe diseases, in full safety.

First, then, must be the determination—the *Will*—the conviction of certainty, to survive and continue.* Without that, all else is

*Col. Olcott has epigrammatically explained the creative or rather the re-creative power of the Will, in his *Buddhist Catechism.* He there shows that this Will to live, if not extinguished in the present life, leaps over the chasm of bodily death, and recombines the *Skandhas,* or groups of qualities that made up the individual into a new personality. Man is, therefore, reborn as the result of his own unsatisfied yearning for objective existence. * * *

useless. And to be efficient for the purpose, it must be not only a passing resolution of the moment, a single fierce desire of short duration, but *a settled and continued strain, as nearly as can be continued and concentrated without one single moment's relaxation.* In a word, the would-be "Immortal" must be on his watch night and day, guarding Self against—Himself. To live—*to live—to live*—must be his unswerving resolve. He must as little as possible allow himself to be turned aside from it. It may be said that this is the most concentrated form of selfishness; that it is utterly opposed to our Theosophic professions of benevolence, and disinterestedness, and regard for the good of humanity. Well, viewed in a short-sighted way, it is so. But to do good, as in every thing else, a man *must have* time and materials to work with, and this is a necessary means to the acquirement of powers by which infinitely more good can be done than without them. When these are once mastered, the opportunities to use them will arrive, for there comes a moment when watch and exertion are no longer needed—the moment when the turning point is safely passed. For the present, as we deal with aspirants and not with advanced *chelas,* in the first stage a determined, dogged resolution, and an enlightened concentration of self on Self, are all that is absolutely necessary. It must not, however, be considered that the candidate is required to be inhuman or brutal in his negligence of others. Such a recklessly selfish course would be as injurious to him as the contrary one of expending his vital energy on the gratification of his physical desires. All that is required from him is a purely negative attitude. Until the *Point* is reached, he must not "lay out" his energy in lavish or fiery devotion to any cause, however noble, however "good," however elevated.* Such, we can solemnly assure the reader, would bring its reward in many ways —perhaps in another life, perhaps in this world—but it would tend to shorten the existence it is desired to preserve, as surely as self-indulgence and profligacy. That is why very few of the truly great

*On page 151 of Mr. Sinnett's *Occult World,* the author's much abused and still more doubted correspondent assures him that none yet of HIS "degree are like the stern hero of Bulwer's" *Zanoni* . . . "the heartless morally dried-up mummies some would fancy us to be"; . . . and adds that few of them "would care to play the part in life of a dessicated pansy between the leaves of a volume of solemn poetry." But our Adept omits saying that *one or two degrees higher,* and he will have to submit for a period of years to such a mummifying process, unless, indeed, he would voluntarily give up a life-long labour and—DIE.—ED. [*Theosophist*].

men of the world (of course, the unprincipled adventurers who have applied great powers to bad uses are out of the question)—the martyrs, the heroes, the founders of religions, the liberators of nations, the leaders of reforms—ever became members of the long-lived "Brotherhood of Adepts" who were by some and for long years accused of *selfishness.* (And that is also why the Yogis, and the Fakirs of modern India—most of whom are acting now but on the *dead-letter* tradition, are required if they would be considered living up to the principles of their profession—to appear *entirely dead* to every inward feeling or emotion.) Notwithstanding the purity of their hearts, the greatness of their aspirations, the disinterestedness of their self-sacrifice, they *could not live, for they had missed the hour....* They may at times have exercised powers which the world called miraculous; they may have electrified man and compelled Nature by fiery and self-devoted Will; they may have been possessed of a so-called superhuman intelligence; they may have even had knowledge of, and communion with, members of our own Occult Brotherhood; but, having deliberately resolved to devote their vital energy to the welfare of others, rather than to themselves, they have surrendered life; and, when perishing on the cross or the scaffold, or falling, sword in hand, upon the battle-field, or sinking exhausted after a successful consummation of a life-object, on death-beds in their chambers, they have all alike had to cry out at last: "Eli, Eli—Lama Sabachthani!"*

* * * * *

The whole *rationale,* then, of the first condition of continued existence in this world, is *(a)* the development of a Will so powerful as to overcome the hereditary (in a Darwinian sense) tendencies of the atoms composing the "gross" and palpable animal frame, to hurry on at a particular period in a certain course of kosmic change;

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*H. P. Blavatsky writes (*Lucifer,* May, 1888) that these "are the Sacramental words used at the final initiation in old Egypt, as elsewhere, during the Mystery of the *putting to death of Chrestos in the mortal body with its animal passions,* and the resurrection of the Spiritual Man as an enlightened Christos in a frame now purified. . . . These words were addressed to the Initiate's 'Higher Self,' the Divine Spirit in him, at the moment when the rays of the morning Sun poured forth on the entranced body of the candidate and were supposed to recall him to life, or his *new rebirth.* They were addressed to the Spiritual Sun *within,* not to a Sun *without,* and ought to read, had they not been distorted for dogmatic purposes: 'MY GOD, MY GOD, HOW THOU DOST GLORIFY ME!' "—Eds. THEOSOPHY.

and *(b)* to so weaken the concrete action of that animal frame as to make it more amenable to the power of the Will. To defeat an army, *you must demoralise and throw it into disorder.* * * * The Will is strengthened, encouraged and directed, and the elements opposing its action are *demoralised.* * * *

The aspirant to longevity then, must be on his guard against *two dangers.* He must beware especially of impure and animal* thoughts. For Science shows that thought is dynamic, and the thought-force evolved by nervous action expanding itself outwardly, must affect the molecular relations of the physical man. The *inner men* ["principles"], however sublimated their organism may be, are still composed of actual, *not hypothetical,* particles, and are still subject to the law that an "action" has a tendency to repeat itself; a tendency to set up analogous action in the grosser "shell" they are in contact with and concealed within.

And, on the other hand, certain actions have a tendency to produce actual physical conditions unfavourable to pure thought, hence to the state required for developing the supremacy of the inner man.

To return to the practical process. A normally healthy mind, in a normally healthy body, is a good starting-point. Though exceptionally powerful and self-devoted natures may sometimes recover the ground lost by mental degradation or physical misuse, by employing proper means, under the direction of unswerving resolution, yet often things may have gone so far that there is no longer stamina enough to sustain the conflict sufficiently long to perpetuate this life; though what in Eastern parlance is called the "merit" of the effort will help to ameliorate conditions and improve matters in another.

However this may be, the prescribed course of self-discipline commences here. It may be stated briefly that its essence is a course of moral, mental, and physical development, carried on in parallel lines—one being useless without the other. The physical man must be rendered more ethereal and sensitive; the mental man more penetrating and profound; the moral man more self-denying and philosophical. And it may be mentioned that all sense of restraint—even if self-imposed—is useless. Not only is all "goodness" that results

*In other words, the thought tends to provoke the deed.—G.M.

from the compulsion of physical force, threats, or bribes (whether of a physical or so-called "spiritual" nature) absolutely useless to the person who exhibits it, its hypocrisy tending to poison the moral atmosphere of the world, but, to be efficacious, the desire to be "good" or "pure" must be spontaneous. It must be a self-impulse from within, a real preference for something higher, not an abstention from vice because of fear of the Law; not a chastity enforced by the dread of "Public Opinion"; not a benevolence exercised through love of praise or dread of consequences in a hypothetical "Future Life."

(To be continued.)

CELIBACY AND THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Is celibacy necessary to the highest spiritual life and attainment? Is this your idea of true occultism?

Answer. By no single way is the highest spiritual life attained. The highest Adept and the true occult student have at some time been wedded. The highest attainment is never reached until a man has passed through this experience. Under certain conditions and at a certain time celibacy is a great aid, but if the student is wedded, then it is his *duty* to continue in that condition, and instead of proving a barrier it will be an assistance to his progress if he rightly comprehends its significance. All the lessons which are taught the true occult student are given in daily life and through nature's laws. The celibate loses some of these lessons—lessons which he must inevitably learn—because he violates a great law of nature.

The result of celibacy is that the student works by intellect alone. It is necessary for true occult work that the heart be used also. One of the greater of the "mysteries" can never be learned by the celibate, for he never stands as the controller of a creative force.

—ZADOK

The Path, November, 1887

TIME AND PLACE

IT is said that punctuality is a great occult virtue. Most of us in modern life may wonder why it is either "great" or "occult." It is unlikely that we will ever earn a practical demonstration of those properties without some assiduous practice of the said virtue in the only sphere where we *can* practice it—daily life. Nor is it a virtue where it is compulsory—as in getting to work on time —though we could remove even from that, the compulsory and hence unfruitful aspect.

Meantime we might engage in some surmises as to its deeper aspects. An Adept, for instance, who has become from our point of view Karma-less—and he is that in proportion to his power as an Adept—can of himself *initiate* no chain of events. He can only intervene beneficently at opportune moments in events inaugurated by those still under the Karmic sway, and he must intervene in such manner as to be unsupervised and unsuspected. A little thought will show that the "opportune moment"—sometimes the only one for centuries, if not forever—is often a split second, or perhaps one of the "ultimate divisions" of time. It may be the flash of perception necessary to avert an automobile collision, or the open door of a flickering thought in some fast-moving mind.

Such an intervention must necessitate not only exquisite and unfaltering timing, but readiness and precaution beforehand—prophetic power, in other words. This is the second of the Adept powers listed in *The Ocean of Theosophy,* and who knows how intricately interlocked, or perhaps identical, are prophecy and *punctuality* in its real sense? Certainly no Adept virtue is suddenly acquired. It must result from years of practice in "ordinary" life.

Heedlessness and procrastination are the progenitors of unpunctuality, and, by operation of the "pairs of opposites," of reckless haste also. There are few of us in modern civilization who, by self-attention, cannot discern this working within us. The reckless driver, though he may escape for years, is building up within himself a power tending surely to involve him and his in catastrophe. The procrastinator—often the same man—builds up by neglect of his small obligations that attitude which will one day, seemingly despite him-

self, cause him a missed opportunity that will be an occasion for life-long regret; perhaps even disaster by haste. To be late at meetings may seem a small thing. But it may betoken an indifference to the comfort of others that is the sign manual of a larger and inner selfishness, more dangerous because more subtle. If we find tardiness "unavoidable," we will, if we are wise, look back to occasions where it was quite avoidable but not very excusable.

Our minds are interconnected on the occult planes. Who knows but that our indifference to being on time may emerge in the mind of another as an indifference to being there at all—one not so "far along" as we think we are, but in the end quite as important? Who knows but that, being there *beforehand and ready,* we may some day meet at the "ultimate moment" another, also beforehand, and ready for a Karmic help that only *we* can give?

To be habitually beforehand and ready may be the foundation of prophetic power.

THE PATH AND THE ASTRAL LIGHT

May one walk for any distance along the Path without being able to see into the Astral Light, or without recognizing anything extraordinary?

Answer. One may journey an entire life-time on "The Path" and not see into the Astral Light *consciously.* All men see into it, for all who dream are looking there, the body being asleep and not receptive. One may journey a long distance and not see, for all do not work in the same manner. Some may hear "ages before they see," or may feel a long time before either seeing or hearing. The tool most efficient at a certain period is the one used.

We may journey the entire way without recognizing anything extraordinary or encountering phenomena. The most extraordinary things are found in the most ordinary, and are overlooked because of their seeming familiarity. When the understanding is directed to the natural, one finds the supra-natural or supra-human things.

All questions are vital so long as they remain unsolved but all will be answered. It requires patience in ourselves, for many times the answers do not come until years after the question has been propounded.

—ZADOK

MIND OF THE AGE

XV: The Dogma of Environment

ONE of the widespread dogmas of the present day is that men cannot improve themselves unless their environments are altered. In Theosophical terms this is a dogma to be opposed and countered, not because it is false—for in one sense it is true—but because belief in the supreme importance of environment is used in specific situations to persuade us that *material* change must precede efforts to replace a prevailing philosophy or psychology.

The truth behind the dogma of environment is that only by offering a better environment can we hope to help any person. No man can spiritually regenerate another: he can only offer him opportunities or contexts in which to seek his own regeneration. Of the many kinds of environment, the most important is that of the mind, and the theosophist proceeds upon the assumption that men live primarily in their minds.

There are multiple reasons why a material environment has come to seem so all-important. If man is not free to develop the economic life he wishes, the reaction will be over-concentration, at some later date, on his economic freedom and well being. In medieval times, men were not encouraged to think about the improvement of social conditions, for any change in the status quo would have been detrimental to the wielders of temporal power—and would also undermine the psychology of accepting the clergy's decrees as to the order of existence. Not only because of acute physical needs caused by disproportion of wealth, but also because religious dogma had long fostered an apathy to economic injustice, the energies released by the Renaissance eventually directed thought into lines of revolutionary, economic change.

The final appeal of all revolutionary movements which promise complete changes in social conditions is in their promise to offer human beings a new or more fruitful context for coming to satisfactory terms with life's experiences. But the first appeal is the appeal of *free thought* on a subject formerly excluded from debate.

Applying the three fundamental propositions of Theosophical philosophy, we can understand, from a metaphysical viewpoint, why

it is natural for man, even as a spiritual being, to devote much time and energy to "material environment." The first fundamental proposition, as a base for every idea of synthesis or integration, suggests that we should integrate all departments of our lives around some central unity. For example, our economic life should be brought into harmony with our mental life. If our mental life reaches above our present economic condition, we naturally seek to bring our environment into alignment with our ideals. So, whether we think socialist thoughts, or capitalist thoughts, or theocratic thoughts, we will inevitably give these thoughts concrete expression. They *should* be given concrete expression. "The end of a man," wrote Carlyle, "is an *action* and not a *thought,* though it were the noblest." (This, of course, is one reason why we cannot fight any political ism effectively as long as we attack it at the political level.)

The second fundamental proposition suggests that in all human beings is a capacity to achieve understanding of Law. We desire to understand all natural laws, for we usually try to think in orderly patterns; in other words, we wish to render our lives predictable. Since the essential elements of economy are much easier to grasp than those of philosophy or religion, we are often tempted to begin our search for law and order by planning our economic life well enough so that our relationship to it, at least, *will* be predictable. Even our dangerous desire for security is derived from a basic need: we seek to find the perfect physical environment because it is a tangible goal, and because a perfect physical environment would establish around us one context we could understand and control.

The third fundamental proposition of Theosophy indicates that we eventually *must* have all the elements of our economic lives under control, in exactly the same way that we must, as souls in evolution, come to a mastery of our relationships with all lesser degrees of living beings. Our economic life, like the Elemental realm, has to be brought into line.

Thus, behind the dogma of environment, as beneath every crystallized materialism, was once some prompting of genuine concern for the soul. Surety or security is the indispensable foundation for man's personal life and, not knowing exactly what to expect of human nature, man seeks the minimum certainty of stable material

surroundings. We want to be able to plan our lives, and our first recourse is to a planned economy.

These considerations, while encouraging us to view sympathetically our economic fanatics, and to recognize a partial kinship with them, also reveal why the philosopher may be the best economist. We cannot improve others unless we offer them a better environment (a more hopeful view of themselves, for example), and we cannot improve ourselves except by making the most of the environment we have. In this connection, the theosophist can appreciate John Steinbeck's introduction of the interesting characters in *Tortilla Flat:* "They are," he wrote, "people who merge successfully with their habitat. In man this is called philosophy, and it is a fine thing." Merging successfully with one's habitat requires, as we know, definite psychological discipline, since in the whole course of social experimentation throughout history no habitat has failed to disclose certain disadvantages and difficulties.

The essence of Buddha's philosophy is that men can find security only by preparing themselves for every deprivation, and then realizing that deprivation itself is of no great significance. The real man—the universal man—remains, whatever happens to the five-sensed man. This doctrine alone, Buddha would say, will enable a man to merge successfully with his habitat, because it will keep him from being frightened by untoward events. An interesting corollary of Buddha's "renunciation of the world" was his desire to constantly simplify the environment in which he and his disciples lived. At this point we come to a clear synthesis of the aims of "devotees of the simple life" and the purposes of philosophers or mystics. While a great many men of hermit-temper unquestionably sought Escape in their removal from economic complications, others may have been seeking the same thing that Buddha sought, that is, mastery of the soul's environment. The simpler the environment, the more readily is it mastered—the process of simplification being itself a form of mastery.

Thoreau was happier at Walden than he would have been in New York, or, for that matter, in Boston. His environment was simple enough to allow him to "merge" with it. (And if the Concord philosopher would have been out of place in the New York or London of his day, envision him in modern Chicago or Los Angeles!)

How can a person who lives in an infinitely complicated industrial economy—where even agricultiure is practical only on a big-business scale—integrate himself with his habitat? Obviously, one needs even more psychological discipline and patience today than Thoreau did a scant hundred years ago, to feel that he fully understands and has a place in the conditions surrounding him.

With the passage of each year, small groups, such as the cooperatives, increasingly demand a return to the soil—the simplest, perhaps, of all environments. Those responsible for education among the cooperators have learned what discipline is mandatory for the children, and something about how to teach it. An integral community is therefore possible. But the present population of the earth and the unequal distribution of wealth will not allow any immediate return to village or farm standards. The average man will continue to find himself immersed in one or another gigantic commercial undertaking of which he has no full understanding. This is the real danger of our economy in this century, and one that can *not* be overcome by any new socialistic ownership of production. It is the accrued karma of man's efforts to change environments without fathoming their cause.

In this context the theosophist must point to another kind of necessary environmental change—a change of mental atmosphere—so that eventually the machinery of civilization may stop encroaching upon the morally free individual. If there is a moral law of compensation in nature, "karma" will allow each man to merge intelligently with his environment, provided, first, that he recognizes—together with Buddha and all Theosophists—that no environment itself is of supreme importance, and, secondly, that he devotes himself sedulously to the simplification of his own life.

The Theosophist who recognizes that he may improve others' conditions only by offering them ideas which will enlarge their mental environment knows also that he can never improve himself except by disregarding entirely the apparent disadvantages of his outer environment, and by altering his attitudes of mind. When we view *other people,* environment—and especially mental environment—must be allowed for, but when we view *ourselves,* we must successfully disbelieve that any alteration of external condition can improve our moral capacity.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"The Psychology of Nationalism"

The all-too-short intervals between wars are nowadays the only opportunities for considering the problem of nationalism without running aground on some charge of treason or disloyalty to one's country. In America, unfortunately, recent events and mass suspicions and insecurities have engendered in many instances a habit of construing any honest criticism into a statement of disloyalty, with the result that often an objective discussion of national policies and national failings is no more welcome in the "cold peace" than it was in the heat of combat.

But, even if unwelcome, there are certain diagnoses we need to hear. One such diagnosis, "The Psychology of Nationalism," by Ernst Fellner, appearing in the *Hibbert Journal* for April, begins innocently enough. Mr. Fellner explores the significant fact that national sentiment does not require logical roots such as similarity of language, religion, race, etc., in order to flourish, citing the old Austrian Empire, which cohered for four hundred years; the present British Empire; and Switzerland, as examples of dissimilar peoples bound together in a common national spirit.

"The Smaller Tie"

> What connection [asks Mr. Fellner] has the English scientist with the English village-idiot? Or the French artist with the French *petit bourgeois?* Or the cultured German with the brutal storm-trooper? The international artists' quarter in Montmartre is proof enough that in the higher spheres nationalism is no barrier. During the German occupation of Europe, the peasants of different nationalities frequently intermarried, their common tie, the soil, being greater than the smaller tie of nationalism. How then is national union possible?

Certainly it is clear that while man's human-ness is a primary attribute, his nationalism is of a secondary or derived nature, stemming, it must be, from a particular set of Karmic attractions and disabilities held in common with a number of other egos. As Mr. Fellner remarks, there are those who have freed themselves from the bonds of nationalism; but whether they have done this by

repudiating those bonds and becoming homeless "men without a country," or by fulfilling and finally transcending them, to become citizens of the world, is an important question, from the theosophical position. Readers of Mr. Judge's article, "Living the Higher Life," will be sensible of the need for fulfilling one's duty to nation, as well as to family, before trying to "separate" from those karmic foci.

"THE MYTH OF THE NATION"

Mr. Fellner continues to investigate the roots of nationalism:

> . . . if the peasant, or the artist, or the workman, or anyone else, can be induced to believe that his life is really the life of the nation, and that without the nation he cannot be biologically rooted, he will begin to believe that his life is identical with that of the nation. The nation or its leader will then become the symbol of his own life-desire; and if his nation is insulted, his own life-interest seems to be threatened; and his life-force is roused within him and drives him to "aggressive defence," just as danger inspires the female of the species to defend her young. . . . Nationalism only became a patriotic fanaticism, binding on all sections of the community, when the nation itself was exalted to being a myth.

This is an application, on the national scale, of what the ancient *Bhagavad-Gita* deplores as a "self-identifying attachment for children, wife, and household." One of the most powerful "identifications" the human race has devised is the God-idea, with which the myth of the State is closely associated. Mr. Fellner writes:

> When the materialistic age destroyed the belief in God, modern man was left with moral codes which imprisoned him, without giving him any hope of final liberation. . . . Instead of submitting the moral codes to a careful scrutiny, and possible revaluation, modern man retained them intact, replacing the displaced god by new and equally exacting idols. Myths, whether of the State, blood, people, race or the nation, took the place of the deity.

VICARIOUS DIVINITY

By identifying himself with this "ideal" of a nation, Mr. Fellner continues, every individual feels greater and nobler himself, gains in strength and self-importance: "By serving the all-powerful 'god,' the servant adopts the master, and himself becomes godlike." Having created a God, it of course becomes necessary to find, or create, a Devil, also. This becomes the enemy nation, and to maintain the

myth of its wickedness as a whole, "history is ransacked to produce all the evil men and all the evil deeds as proof of the verisimilitude of the myth."

> Wrapped in the cloak of an ideal, modern man can strive for power; and in this way overcome his feelings of psychological uprootedness. He can, without being conscious of it, regain his individual self-importance. The State justifies all those things which his Christian religion or humanitarian upbringing forbid him to do as an individual. He is permitted to let loose the reins which controlled the animal within him—more ardent to run wild after its long imprisonment in moral codes. In the name of national honour, he is allowed to satisfy his lust for power; and in the name of national duty he is allowed to prove his superiority by cruelty and destruction. . . .
>
> By concealing his selfish instincts under the cloak of an ideal, modern man can once again act like the primitive savage of totem tribes. But modern man is worse than the savage because he lacks the savage's innocence. He is self-righteous and devoid of self honesty.

Fortunately, this is not the whole of the story of man. The human being can, and often does, align himself on the side of individual thought and responsibility, rather than abase himself before the totem of public opinion and mass prejudice—and not a few have found and are finding in self-discipline of the "animal" nature a high road to freedom from the domination of all myths and idols.

Physiological Magic

The medicinal use of plants is not a new idea. When humanity was young, those great beings who appeared as the benefactors of men, taught this art; and in Asia the subject has always been extensively studied. The mythical Hermes revealed it, and Paracelsus—said by H. P. Blavatsky to be the greatest Occultist of the Middle Ages, and the cleverest physician of his age—believed, as did Mesmer later, that metals, as well as woods and plants, have an affinity with and bear a close relation to the human organism, and that the secret of healing lies in a knowledge of correspondences and interrelations.

As early as 1886, Mme. Blavatsky denominated the medical profession of that day as honeycombed with "prejudice, materialism,

atheism and malicious stubbornness." This attitude was especially noticeable in the allopathic field, where doctors looked with scorn at any suggested cures not coming from the laboratory. Gradually the situation has been changing, and now not only are the ancient remedies not ignored, but top-flight medical researchers believe that "the next crop of wonder drugs may come to us fresh from the mumbo-jumbo experts of savage tribes in the jungles of Africa, South America, and Asia."

"Is the Witch Doctor Helping You?"

This is the title of an article in *Collier's* for April 2, by Harold Wolff, which sums up briefly the advances made in thought along this line for the last few decades. Some excerpts follow:

> . . . the quaint remedies that our pioneer grandmothers learned from the Indians are also proving to be more than just old wives' tales. Doctors used to look down their professional noses at the recipe that Grandma prescribed for asthma. But they have come around to the theory that these primitive potions may be treatments for illnesses ranging from the common cold to cancer.
>
> Since the end of the war, this hunch has set medical researchers to wheedling know-how from the . . . witch doctors of the Upper Amazon, and holding medical confabs with the magicians of the Australian bushmen. Our drug experts are prying into the secret lore of the medicine men of the Apache and swapping penicillin for the herbs of the healers of the Azande of Central Africa. And already the cures of these primitive medical practitioners are taking their place in your doctor's little black bag.

The Story of the Mandrake Root

> Years ago explorers returned from the Australian bush talking of the exploits of native magicians whose bedside manner resembled a jitterbug dance. First they waved a leafy branch to drive off spirits, and then they fed their patients a dose of mandrake broth, that, according to eyewitness reports, actually worked wonders. Doctors politely replied "absurd." They pointed out that mandrake was nothing more than a first cousin to the potato.
>
> In the Dark Ages, sorcerers had hoodwinked people with the story that mandrake was so super-magic that it would scream if you dug it up. So the medieval hocus-pocus artists trained dogs to root it out. And in the U.S., Cherokee witch doctors made medicine from the American mandrake. "Sheer nonsense, all of it," said the medics. At least they said that until someone took

mandrake apart in the laboratory and found that it contains a powerful drug which tends to increase the flow of bile.

All of this information was available when *The Secret Doctrine* was published in 1888, to those who cared to read—

> The Mandragora is the *mandrake* of the Bible, of Rachel and Leah. They are the roots of a plant, fleshy, hairy, and forked below, representing roughly the limbs of a man, the body and even a head. Its magical and mysterious properties have been proclaimed in fable and play from the most archaic ages. From Rachel and Leah, who indulged in witchcraft with them, down to Shakespeare, who speaks of *shrieking*—
>
> ". . . . Like mandrakes torn out of the earth
> That living mortals, hearing them, run mad—"
>
> —the mandragora was *the* magic plant *par excellence.*
>
> These roots, without any stalk, and with large leaves growing out of the head of the root, like a gigantic crop of hair, present little similitude to man when found in Spain, Italy, Asia Minor, or Syria. But on the Isle of Candia, and in Karamania near the city of Adan, they have a wonderfully human form; being very highly prized as amulets. They are also worn by women as a charm against sterility, and for other purposes. They are especially effective in *Black Magic.* (*S.D.* II, 27 fn.)

CHANCE?

In 1947, at New York's Sloan-Kettering Institute, two doctors were growing cancer cells in a test tube, feeding them rations of blood serum.

> One morning a routine check found the diseased cells all dead. That, to a cancer researcher, is the best news in the book; it means there is something in the test tube which is death to at least some type of cancer. An excited search led to the woman who had donated the blood, and it turned out that in treating her for a rare kind of wart, her physician had tried an extract made from mandrake root.
>
> Subsequent experiments at the National Cancer Institute in Washington, proved that mandrake effectively checks the growth of cancer in mice. Tests on human patients are now being prepared.
>
> At the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh, cancer researchers are investigating another jungle brew, this one a top-secret formula used by the head-hunting Jivaros of Ecuador. Doctors who have seen the Jivaros shrink the skulls of their enemies to the size of an apple, have an idea that the formula they use may also shrink cancer cells.

EXOTIC CURES

Some of the cures which the medical men have found by "chance" sound almost fantastic, but each year brings more and more respect in all quarters for primitive methods. A few instances might be of interest: a Navy research project at Western University, Cleveland, has been testing 1,100 plants, most of which were used by Indian witch doctors; 25 of them have proved effective against the flu virus; a species of wild parsnip produces an oil that is active against the organisms that cause pneumonia, meningitis and valley fever (hitherto there has been no specific treatment for the latter); polio virus has been completely neutralized by another plant extract, the name of which is being kept secret until more experiments have been completed. A recent news item reported that a "soil" of cocoanut milk caused phenomenal growth of carrots.

Dr. Otto Loewi, research professor of pharmacology at New York University, and Nobel prize winner for his work in medicine, is one of those most prominent in urging that more attention be paid to primitive medicine, for he feels "that just as Nature provides food for the organism, so she seems to provide plants for the treatments of illness. . . ." The treasure hunt for promising new drugs is in full swing; drug firms are sponsoring drug-hunting expeditions, and the United Nations has organized an expedition into the interior of Brazil, for the purpose of making contact with the Collahuayas, a strange Bolivian tribe that specializes in the preparation of drugs which they sell all over South America.

An interesting point brought out in the *Collier's* article is that plants and herbs used in their natural state are always more effective than when "refined" by laboratory methods. Could not this turning away from the blind belief in the infallibility of scientific medicine to the recognition of the potency of natural methods, be one of the changes in what H.P.B. called "the psychic idiosyncrasies of humanity?"

MAN AND HIS ALPHABET

Always, in discussions of origins, we are faced with the myopia which seems to afflict most learned circles. A recent work by Dr. David Diringer, based on his equally formidable Italian study published in 1937, gives two accounts of how the North Semitic alpha-

bet was adopted by the Greeks and supplied by them with vowels. (*The Alphabet—A Key to the History of Mankind:* London, 1948.) He remarks that "all the evidence points to the conclusion that the alphabet was taken over by the Greeks from the Phoenicians in the eleventh century B.C."; but elsewhere he suggests Greek and Canaanite (with its Hebrew and Phoenician sub-branches) as two divergent streams of the North Semitic script. From the Greeks to the Romans via the Etruscans, and so to the rest of Europe, is the accepted route. As a reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement* (July 17, 1948) puts it:

> The same set of symbols, through its Aramaic branch, was the progenitor of nearly every other alphabet in the world. By adoption, adaptation, "idea diffusion," Islamic and Christian penetration, and in other ways, it furnished the basis for almost all the scripts of Central Asia, India, and further India. Only the great ideographic Wall of China halted its eastward march.

It will be seen that the academic mind in this respect is emulating those German orientalists and English and American Sanskritists of the nineteenth century, who accepted Prof. Weber's view that India had no idea or knowledge of the Zodiac prior to the Macedonian invasion! All the available evidence points in the opposite direction in both fields of research.

The Invention of Letters

The chief emphasis is placed by Dr. Diringer on his theory that the alphabet was invented only once. He recognizes that peoples of every continent had systems of writing, and that through pictographs, ideographs and mixed scripts, some passed to the syllabic stage. But he favors the North-Western Semites as taking the final step of creating a true alphabet. Although the reviewer mentioned sticks to the theory that "somewhere in Palestine or Syria during the Hyksos period (1730-1580 B.C.) the first alphabet was scratched into existence," his criticism of Dr. Diringer on the Semitic origin of a true alphabet is justified:

> But whether a "true" alphabet from the Semitic point of view would be as "true" from other points of view is a question which only definition could decide. This reveals the most serious defect in an otherwise excellent and staggeringly erudite work.

"LANGUAGE OF THE DEVAS"

Most of the difficulties experienced by philologists arise from the fact that (in common with archeologists and historians generally) they have not given attention to the traditions of deities and mysterious gods among ancient nations. For, to these—the Kabiri or Titans—is ascribed the invention of *Devanagari,* "the alphabet and language of the gods":

> The members of several esoteric schools—the seat of which is beyond the Himalayas, and whose ramifications may be found in China, Japan, India, Tibet, and even in Syria, besides South America—claim to have in their possession the *sum total* of sacred and philosophical works in MSS. and type: all the works, in fact, that have ever been written, in whatever language or characters, since the art of writing began; from the ideographic hieroglyphs down to the alphabet of Cadmus and the Devanagari. (*S.D.* Intro. xxiii.)

The "missing link" in this field of evolution is to be found in the fact that "the alphabet and the art of writing were kept secret for ages, as the *Dwijas* (Twice-born) and the *Dikshitas* (Initiates) alone were permitted to use the art." Because the word *lipi* (writing) is absent from the oldest manuscripts, the orientalists assumed erroneously that *writing* "was not only unknown before the days of Panini, but even to that sage himself"—notwithstanding his composition of "the most perfect of all the grammars that were ever made." Presumably, our modern *amour-propre* is wounded if we are asked to accept the truth that "writing was invented by the Atlanteans, and not at all by the Phoenicians" (*S.D.* II, 439).

"OLD WIVES SAID SO . . ."

It is becoming rather fashionable these days to examine the evils which "urbanization" has brought to American culture, from the breakdown of family life to the heightened incidence of many diseases, nervous troubles and insanities. But ranking in our minds with learned treatises, for its graphic revelation of the losses which our rootless citification has inflicted on us, is an unassuming reminiscence contributed to *Woman's Day* (March) by Margaret Widdemer. Chancing to spice a conversation with an old household saying, "Everybody to his taste, as the old woman said when she kissed the cow," Miss Widdemer was surprised to see that the expression

was quite new to her young companion. This started her on an interesting line of thought:

> I spent my trip home trying to decide why old sayings are not known any longer. There was something durable about old sayings. They backed you up. They had been used for hundreds of years, and here they still were, as useful as ever.
>
> "Put tire to tire and at it again!" I can hear my mother now, saying cheerfully as she stopped to get breath after a tough piece of work. And she would pick up and go on. She hadn't heard of William James's theory of the "second wind," the draft on a deeper level of consciousness; the proverb had been passed on to her from a string of ancestors who mightn't have known it in theory, but who had proved it.
>
> An Irish maid we had, had another way of saying the same thing, or nearly. "Patience and perseverance made a bishop of His Reverence!" she would quote irreverently, and begin polishing the nineteenth teaspoon. As for my grandmother, she used to say, finishing a pile of socks and starting on the pile of family flannels, "Well, leg over leg, as the dog went to Dover!"

"A Touch With Nature"

Such expressions are mantrams—words whose sound induces vibrations not only in the air, but also in the finer ether. Mr. Judge remarks in "Conversations on Occultism" (January THEOSOPHY) that the common people make use of them continually:

> It is a touch with nature and her laws always preserved by the masses. . . . "Society," too cultured to be natural, has adopted methods of speech intended to conceal and to deceive, so that natural mantrams cannot be studied within its borders.

It is precisely this "touch with nature" and with all men down through the ages which Miss Widdemer senses as the source of power in the household phrases and proverbs she is analyzing:

> . . . somehow or other, most of the proverbs reassured you; you could carry on. Other people back through the centuries had been tired or bored or discouraged too, or even thought they simply couldn't do whatever it was. But leg over leg, tire to tire, patiently and perseveringly, they had blazed a trail. And you could follow it. You weren't alone, hewing the trees away to get where you might never go.

Mantrams, it is said, set up a lasting vibration in the mind, "leading to a realization in action of the idea involved, or to a total change of life due to the appositeness of the subjects brought up and to the peculiar mental antithesis induced in the hearer."

The mantram may be forgotten when the effect begins to appear, since the *law of habit* will hold sway in the brain. Miss Widdemer quotes proverbs like "It's a long lane that has no turning," and "It's always darkest before dawn"—phrases which undeniably work their magic on the principle explained by Mr. Judge. Miss Widdemer comments:

> Lanes *had* turned, just as your discouraged ancestors thought they were going on forever. Dawns *had* always showed up, no matter how dark it was just beforehand. It was likely, from generations of proof, that they eternally would; and you weren't any exception to a thousand years of family experience. You strode on confidently, through an unimportant moment to the dawn and the turning.

"A POSSE OF GRANDMOTHERS"

Miss Widdemer deplores the fact that children are brought up "to go their own way, unhampered by moralizing or improving words from any boring, well-meaning elders. If their elders have learned anything by experience, they have little intention of passing it along. And I for one think that attitude has gone far enough on its shirking way." Her suggested remedy has a grass-roots value:

> The next time I have the least bit more money than I can actually use (which of course mayn't happen because "Waste not, want not" never did sink in as deep as the rest), I shall endow a posse of firm-handed, country grandmothers. Their duty will be to enter all homes where parents have worn themselves out just being pals with their children. For one hour daily these old ladies will recite, in a dogmatic way, all the proverbs they know. And if I know the kids, they'll lap it up. They are hungry for something to tie to. As for me, it won't matter whether I die penniless or not, because I shall die happy. After all, "There are no pockets in a shroud."

An even better solution, of course, would be for parents and children both to renew the mind's acquaintance with fundamental philosophy, with self-evident principles of ethics, out of which the "common knowledge" of folk-proverbs originally came. The *Bhagavad-Gita* among scriptures, and, in the literature of informal wisdom, such volumes as Mr. Judge's *Letters That Have Helped Me* or *The Friendly Philosopher,* by Robert Crosbie—these have rich veins of mantrams, waiting to be mined and minted afresh by each one who reads and ponders.

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